

CONTACT INFORMATION

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**NPEI AND CITY OF NIAGARA FALLS MARK EARTH DAY WITH CEREMONIAL
TREE PLANTING AT BIRCHWAY NIAGARA**

NIAGARA FALLS, ONTARIO, April 22, 2025 – In celebration of Earth Day 2025, Birchway Niagara hosted a ceremonial tree planting. The event, held on April 22, saw the planting of two white birch trees on the shelter's front lawn on McLeod Rd.

The trees were generously provided through the [Complimentary Street Tree Program](#), a program that was created by a partnership with the City of Niagara Falls' Environmental Action Committee and Niagara Peninsula Energy Inc. (NPEI). NPEI and the city, both long-time supporters of local domestic violence services, planted the trees to demonstrate the community's commitment to supporting survivors of abuse as they rebuild their lives. NPEI, which funds this program, also donates trees as part of their ongoing commitment to enhancing the urban forest canopy.

During the event, Birchway Niagara was pleased to welcome a number of guests, including NPEI President & CEO Brian Wilkie, who explained that his organization was "proud to be supporting Birchway in planting these beautiful trees —a meaningful symbol of growth, renewal, and our shared commitment to the environment."

Mayor Jim Diodati and Niagara Falls City Councillors Victor Pietrangelo and Mike Strange, also spoke at the event. Councillor Strange, who co-chairs the volunteer Environmental Action Committee with Pietrangelo, highlighted the importance of the committee's partnership with NPEI for initiatives like today's tree planting. "NPEI is a great partner that provides a large source of financial funding each year. They generously give the committee funding to help plant trees, conduct clean-ups and to host our [Summer Trillium Awards Program](#)."

Four of the community volunteers who serve on the Environmental Action Committee (John Anstruther, John Brucato, Pat Futino and Jennifer Baldinelli,) planted the first white birch tree during the ceremony, encouraging members of our community to “try this at home,” by planting trees on their properties to help green our city. Staff of Birchway Niagara also planted a second birch as the ceremony came to a close.

Birch trees, which are known for their ability to withstand difficult conditions, were chosen to represent the resilience of the individuals and families who turn to Birchway Niagara for support. “We are honoured,” explains Birchway Niagara Executive Director, Jennifer Gauthier, “to be part of a community that not only supports a greener, healthier environment, but also stands united in creating a safer future for everyone impacted by abuse. The birch trees planted today are a powerful symbol of resilience — rooted in hope and nurtured by community support.”

Earth Day has been celebrated since 1970 and today is celebrated by close to 200 nations around the world. It challenges members of our community to take part in making our community a clean and safe place for everyone to enjoy.

For more information about this event, please contact:

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Originating in the 1980s with two women’s shelters in Welland and Niagara Falls, Birchway Niagara provides compassionate services to individuals impacted by abuse including a 24-hour support line, safe shelter and counselling. Formerly known as Women’s Place, the agency evolved in 2022 by consolidating emergency shelter services for women and children at their Niagara Falls location on McLeod Rd and continues to offer outreach services at offices across South Niagara. In March 2023, a new name and logo were announced to reflect the growing understanding that abuse is an issue that negatively impacts everyone, and that everyone must be involved and supported to build a community without abuse.